Balance of Trade between India and Malaysia

73. SHRI T. VENKATRAM REDDY:
SHRI S. PRATHAPA REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of balance of trade between India and Malaysia during each of the last three years; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to boost our exports to that country, area-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The details of balance of trade between India and Malaysia during the last three years is as follows:-

(Value in US$ Million)

Year	Exports	Imports	Balance of Trade
1992-93	187.04	405.23	(—) 218.19
1993-94	246.00	247.00	(—) 1.00
1994-95	284.83	486.68	(—) 201.85

(SOURCE: DGCI&S)

(b) A number of trade/business level delegations from India have been encouraged to visit Malaysia to boost our exports. The products covered by the delegations included oil and gas, handicrafts, telecommunications, electrical goods and electronics, power, dyestuffs and intermediates, coffee, etc., Indian companies have also been participating in various exhibitions and trade fairs in Malaysia in order to increase our exports.

Membership of SAPTA

74. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has lately joined the South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) as its 5th member;

(b) if so, who are the other members of the Trading Arrangement and other details of the SAPTA arrangement; and

(c) how is it likely to affect India's balance of trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir, India has ratified the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) on 22.8.1995.

(b) Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka are the other Member countries of SAPTA Agreement. Under the SAPTA Agreement Tariff concessions have to be negotiatied amongst member countries product-wise on a step by step basis. Negotiations for exchange of first round of tariff concessions under SAPTA were concluded at the 6th meeting of the Inter-Governmental Group on Trade Liberalisation held at Kathmandu on 20th and 21st April, 1995.

(c) SAPTA Agreement is likely to enlarge intra-SAARC Trading opportunities which is expected to benefit all the trading partners.

Commission on Labour Standards

75. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Commission on Labour Standards under the Chairmanship of Dr. Subramanian Swamy has suggested adoption of a middle-path in the matter of inclusion of what is called the Social Clause within the ambit of the World Trade Organisation as suggested by the developed countries; and

(b) if so, what is the Commission's precise recommendation and what decision Government has taken in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) No final report has so far been submitted by the Commission to the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

Development of backward districts in Orissa

76. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have drawn up some special schemes for the development of some backward districts in Orissa;

(b) if so, what are those special schemes and the funds earmarked for implementing those schemes; and

(c) the details of the backward districts where these schemes are proposed to be implemented?

THE MINISTRY OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAVA): (a) to (c) No specific scheme has been formulated by the Government for tackling the prolem of backwardness in selected areas/districts. However the Government is committed to eradication of rural poverty through self employment and wage earning programmes. Under the wage employment programmes the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) was a single wage employment programme in operation throughout the country at the beginning of the Eighth Five Year Plan. However in 1993-94 it was modified and a Second Stream of JRY (Intensified JRY) was introduced in 120 backward districts where there is a concentration of poverty and under employment. Out of the 30 districts in Orissa, 9 districts are covered under this Intensified JRY; these are Koraput, Mayurbhanj, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Sundergarh, Kalahandi, Keonjbar, Ganjam and Phulbani. In addition in 1993-94 an Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) was launched in identified backward blocks situated in the drought prone areas, desert areas, tribal areas and hilly areas. Out of the 233 blocks in the EAS districts of Orissa 175 blocks are covered under the EAS. The funds allocated towards these poverty alleviation schemes during the last three years is given below:

(Rs. lakhs)

Programme	1993-94 Allocation	1994-95 Allocation	1995-96 Allocation (as on 13.11.1995)
JRY	199972.66	21984.43	25484.70
1st Stream			
2nd Stream	7143.75	7143.75	3982.98
EAS	5335.00	9855.00*	6612.50*

*Funds Released, as no statewise allocations are made under EAS.

Flood disaster in Mines

77. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Director General of Mines Safety (EGMS) had given instructions for the construction of sufficiently stable and high embankments to avert flood disasters in mines;

(b) if so, the actual instructions or recommendations of DGMS and what action has so far been taken in this regard;